

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 SY-02 L-01 /024 W  
-----282102 078047 /75-70

P 281945Z FEB 77  
FM AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 380

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT OF SPAIN 0536

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, ASEC, TD, US  
SUBJECT: FURTHER DISCUSSION ON MARINE SECURITY GUARDS  
FOR EMBASSY

REF: (A) STATE 29003, (B) PORT OF SPAIN 122,  
(C) PORT OF SPAIN 279

1. DURING A CALL ON FOREIGN MINISTER JOHN DONALDSON  
ON FEBRUARY 25 ON ANOTHER SUBJECT, I RAISED OFF THE RECORD  
THE SUBJECT OF MARINE SECURITY GUARDS FOR THE EMBASSY. I ASKED  
DONALDSON WHY THE GOTT HAD SENT US A NOTE REFUSING  
PERMISSION FOR THE ASSIGNMENT OF MARINES TO TRINIDAD  
WHEN DONALDSON HAD HIMSELF TWO WEEK PREVIOUSLY  
INFORMED ME THAT THE EMBASSY COULD HAVE MARINE SECURITY  
GUARDS (REFTELS B AND C).

2. DONALDSON FIRST STATES THAT THE GOTT RECOGNIZES  
THE PREROGATIVE OF EMBASSIES TO PROVIDE FOR THEIR OWN  
INTERNAL SECURITY. THE GOVERNMENT, HE SAID DOES NOT  
AND WILL NOT INQUIRE INTO THE BACKGROUNDS OR SPECIFIC  
DUTIES OF PERSONNEL ASSIGNED TO THE EMBASSY. DONALD-  
SON INDICATED CLEARLY THAT THE GOTT WOULD NOT OBJECT  
TO THE ASSIGNMENT OF INCONSPICUOUS, NON-UNINFORMED  
SECURITY PERSONNEL TO THE EMBASSY. ON THE OTHER HAND,  
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HE SAID, BECAUSE OF SENSITIVITIES RELATED TO THE  
"OCCUPATION" OF TRINIDAD BY U.S. MILITARY FORCES  
DURING AND AFTER WORLD WAR II AND A WISH TO AVOID  
SETTING AN UNDESIRABLE PRECEDENT, THE GOTT WILL NOT  
GIVE ITS APPROVAL TO THE STATIONING OF ARMED MILITARY  
SECURITY PERSONNEL AT THE AMERICAN OR ANY OTHER DIPLO-  
MATIC MISSION IN TRINIDAD. THE GOVERNMENT WAS

PARTICULARLY NOT PREPARED TO GIVE ITS ASSENT IN WRITING TO THE STATIONING OF A MARINE SECURITY GUARD DETACHMENT IN TRINIDAD. HE ALSO PROVIDED NO ASSURANCES THAT THE GOTT WOULD REMAIN INDIFFERENT IF SECURITY PERSONNEL WERE ASSIGNED TO TRINIDAD AND SUBSEQUENTLY BECAME A DIFFICULT INTERNAL POLITICAL ISSUE.

3. DONALDSON ALSO SAID THAT THREE OTHER DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS HAD MADE SIMILAR REQUESTS REGARDING SECURITY PERSONNEL AND THAT THE MINISTRY HAD TURNED DOWN ALL THREE. TO ACCEDE TO ONE REQUEST WOULD MAKE IT NECESSARY TO ACCEDE TO ALL.

4. I RESPONDED THAT WHILE THE USG WOULD CONSIDER MAKING THE PRESENCE OF THE MARINES AS INCONSPICUOUS AS NECESSARY, IT WOULD NOT BRING THEM TO TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO ON A SURREPTITIOUS BASIS. I SAID THAT I FOUND THE GOTT UNREASONABLY SENSITIVE TO STATIONING OF SEVEN U.S. MARINES IN THE COUNTRY. I DID NOT INDICATE, HOWEVER, THAT THE USG WOULD PURSUE THE QUESTION FURTHER.

5. COMMENT: IN ORDER TO COORDINATE ACTION AND INFORMATION WITHIN THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS ON THIS ISSUE, AND FOLLOW-UP ON THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S COMMENT REGARDING OTHER PENDING REQUESTS OF THIS NATURE, I HAVE TODAY CALLED ON THE DEAN OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS AND AM CONSULTING WITH A FEW OTHER KEY AMBASSADORS TO DETERMINE IF WE CANNOT BRING COORDINATED PRESSURE ON CONFIDENTIAL

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THE GOTT ON THIS ISSUE. I WILL REPORT FURTHER WHEN THESE CONSULTATIONS HAVE BEEN COMPLETED.  
FAY

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## Message Attributes

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**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Review Markings:**  
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